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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ECONOMY

A Six Part Series on What Every Real Estate Developer and Professional Needs to Know about Getting the Job Done in Colorado.

Community Development in the New Economy: An Overview

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Topics for Today's Discussion

- Unique Considerations of the Public Sector
- Public Financing
- Environmental Issues
- Air Quality and Transportation
- Land Use and Entitlements
- Public Involvement

Some Basic Themes

- Limited public funds means more creativity/greater scrutiny
- Track record is important
- Big projects can't get done without federal/public assistance
- Policies don't always translate to implementation

Considerations of the Public Sector

What Will the Public Sector Emphasize?

- Job Creation
- Developer track record
- Milestones
- More control over the land
- Development needs to pay its own way
- Greater emphasis on quality/placemaking

Considerations of the Public Sector

How will the public sector seek to promote development?

- Streamlining development review/zoning
- Removing barriers
- Acting as facilitator/promoting new arrangements (e.g. Urban Land Conservancy)
- Creating the building blocks (e.g. Arapahoe Square)
- Trying not to cannibalize existing tax base

Public Financing

- Tap multiple sources (Metro Districts, URAs, DDAs, BIDs etc.) to access property tax revenue, tax increment revenue, special assessment revenue, etc.
- Exploit federal and state funding available
- Search out substantial private investors looking for places to invest (but know that control or equity requirements may be steep)
- Bring patience, creativity and tenacity to the effort

Environmental Issues

- Focus on bargain hunting increases likelihood of environmental conditions that require remediation or management
- Managing actual or potential liability associated with environmental contamination is key to taking advantage of the bargains
- Public and private sector both more willing to be involved with environmentally contaminated property

Air Quality/Transportation

- Denver will be subject to stricter EPA air quality regulations – expected by end of July, 2011
- Regional Air Quality Council has been charged with coming up with new land use and transportation measures
 - More focus on concentrating development near transit
 - More consideration of transportation pricing to reduce VMT
 - Consideration of changed parking policies to reduce travel demand
- DRCOG's role will increase in terms of transportation projects on the Regional Transportation Plan

Land Use and Entitlements

- Denver needs more active, strategic thinking about major projects
- Emphasis now on establishing building blocks (Arapahoe Square)
- New Denver Zoning Code focuses on locations for new development and appropriate density in each location
- In Denver, Development Services department provides some streamlined processes inter-agency
- Should anticipate increased fees

Public Involvement

- Public/community organizations and developers both getting smarter
- Early engagement
- Transparency
- New ways to communicate

Lessons from Major Projects

- Stapleton
- Denver Union Station
- Cherokee
- Westminster Mall
- FasTracks/TOD projects